

# Walk-Up PHEASANT HUNTING

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #256 —

As far as I know, there are only two ways to hunt pheasants – walk them up with or without a dog or dogs, or participate in some type of a “driven” shoot, where you stand in a designated shooting spot while a support team puts the birds to flight over your head. It takes a lot of pheasants and staff to pull off a “driven” shoot, and they are much more traditional and popular in the United Kingdom and Europe than they are here in the United States.

Still, there are a few; Midway Farms, Inc. puts on two or three each year on their shooting preserve, sending a few hundred birds over the heads of the anxious shooters. These are called “Continental” shoots, as all the birds are released from one release site and the shooters rotate in a circle from peg to peg, around the release site. The

Labrador retrievers retrieve

the dead birds and all the crippled ones they can find; and some of the shooters do walk-up hunts immediately after the shoot. But still, some pheasants get away completely

untouched -- and that's where this story begins.

First of all, let me say this might more appropriately be called “drive-up” hunting rather than “walk-up”. Dick Leeper, my hunting buddy, and I drive a Polaris Ranger EV (electric) around the edges of the fields – following the dog, until she's on point; then, we dismount and begin the walk-up. Of course, this is just a prerogative of older age, and a bit more disposable income than when we were younger.



A successful morning! Dick Leeper (L), Skye and me, on the steps of the lodge at Midway Farms. Dick has a Ruger over/under in 20 gauge and I'm shooting a Purdey 28 gauge side by side.

The pheasants often fly a long way from the release site, and many start walking once they hit the ground – going even farther. We've got a favorite spot we park the pickup and trailer to unload the Polaris. From there on, it's mostly follow the dog toward whatever

cover she wants

to explore. We generally go “walk-up” hunting two or three times

after each “driven” bird shoot, getting as few as two and as many as seven birds in a two and half hour hunt. We don't let many get away.

One of the highlights of most of these hunts is the nice covey of quail that flushes from a big briar patch at the top of a small hollow. Quail season has already closed, so we just smile and watch them fly away, saying “we will be back in the fall.”

“...might more appropriately be called 'drive-up' hunting...”

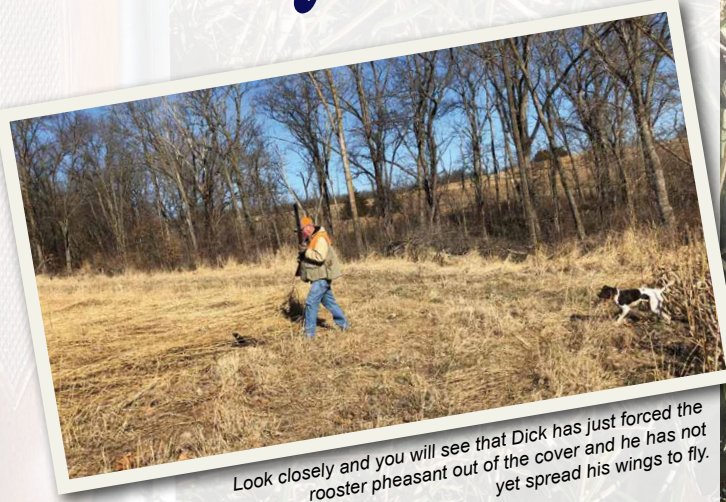


Snow on the ground this morning, and cold enough to need a sock hat. I'm shooting a Purdey 410 side by side.

**USA**  
**Midway**

Larry Potterfield

Midway Farms  
Howard County, Missouri  
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Look closely and you will see that Dick has just forced the rooster pheasant out of the cover and he has not yet spread his wings to fly.